THE WOUNDS SPEAK

NAEEM SIDDIQI

PREFACE

By : Maryam Jameelah

No other age has witnessed violence on such an unprecedented scale as ours. Among those most victimized by this inhumanity are the Muslims. The Muslim blood shed in Palestine, in Kashmir, in India, Cyprus, Zanzibar and Ethiopia bears testimony to such modern tyrants like General Moshe Dayan, Archbishop Mackarios, Emperor Haile Selassi and the Fascist Jana Sangh who are convinced that genocide is the only remedy for those condemned as guilty of the unpardonable crime of trying to preserve a different way of life.

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The largest areas of Asia and Africa freed since World War II from direct European colonial rule are inhabited by Muslim majorities. Their plight is compounded by the Great Powers both from East and West who strive to dominate them economically, militarily and culturally until even their hard-won political independence is scarcely more than a meaningless slogan. Since these Afro-Asian countries with Muslim majorities have emerged from colonial rule materially poor and economically backward, their westernised rulers are obsessed with the delusion that "progress" depends upon a blind and uncritical imitation of Western culture.

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In each of these lands exists courageous groups who shape their lives according to the principle that this exploitation, oppression and presecution of the weak by the strong can be replaced by a universal brotherhood of mankind if the teachings of Holy Quran and the example of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) are faithfully implemented both indivi-

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Editor

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A NEW VOICE IN POETRY

In 'The Wounds Speak' we hear in Urdu poetry - rather in the world poetry, a new voice, the voice of Mr. Fazlur Rahman Naeem Siddiqi, pioneer of the Islamic School of Thought in Urdu poetry and literaure.

A quarter of a century hence when he picked up his poetic pen, Imperialism having reached its zenith was facing the challenge of various independence movements. During this period had also emerged certain Islamic movements, consequents upon the un-Islamic, materialistic and atheistic ideologies coming in the wake of British Imperialism. This

period witnessed the tug of war between Islamic forces and un-Islamic elements each trying its utmost to gain as much ground as possible and to win as large a number of followers or camp bearers as possible. To fight against Imperialism, westernism, modernism and other anti-Islamic movements a glaxy of powerful personalities appeared on the scene. Towering personalities - poets, writers and leaders were produced by this age. Poets: Maulana Altaf Husain Hali, Akbar of Allahabad, Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, etc. Prose Writers: Maulvi Nazir Ahmad Delhvi, Maulana Rashed-al-Khairi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Khawaja Hasan Nizami of Delhi, etc. Then came Iqbal. He assimilated the virtues of his age leaving its vices for others. His artful pen thundred like a gun, made the ideological and cultural tumults of atheism, materialism, westernism and modernism his targets, and hit them with full force. Behind him Iqbal left a rich literary tradition which reflected a strong strife against the anti-Islamic forces and powerful pleading of Islam.

However, the forces of materialism, atheism and other un-Islamic attitudes coming in the wake of the British regime were not sitting idle. In 1935 erupted what is some times called the "modern" and some times termed as the "progressive" movement in Urdu literature. Religion, morality, social traditions of Muslims, nothing escaped its onslaughts. When in 1947 Independence was won, it looked as if these "modern" and "progressive" writers held the sway and that the literary tradition left by Iqbal was to be inherited by nobody and was eclipsed by his antagonists. These writers occupied position of vantage and the means of mass propaganda viz. radio, film, literary magazines, writers' associations and publishing organisations, all were at their disposal. They also penetrated during the last world-war in the governmental machinery of Information and Broadcasting Department. But as time passed these writers gradually lost the ground gained by them. Reason : Hollowness and falsehood of the ideologies they believed in, professed and practised. And it transpired that

although the literary tradition left by Iqbal had been ignored, it had been only overshadowed for the timebeing and it had all the potents to bloom at any time. Reason: his message and poetical tradition was based upon the true ideology of Islam, and it was deeply rooted in the minds and souls of the Muslim masses.

Iqbal's literary tradition found a true exponent and faithful heir in Naeem Siddiqi who inherited and furthered the literary tradition founded by Iqbal. Compared to Iqbal's predecessors Naeem Siddiqi occupies a much better position. The former though all luminaries in Urdu literature had only interited the tradition of love for Muslim Nation; a nation which had once been powerful and ruler but now decadent and powerless. They lacked consciousness of Islam, in the real sense of the word, as a living movement, as a life giving ideology. But during the period under review there emerged the great thinker of Islam in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. He had deeply drunk at

the fountain of Islam and had also fully tasted the poisonous anti-Islamic systems and ideologies. Our reference is to Maulana Syed Abul A'ala Maudoodi. In the person of the Maulana the decadent Muslim society found a fit person aiming at the revival of Islamic movement through most modern and most scientific methods.

Maulana's writings left indelible impressions on the mind of Naeem Siddiqi. These impressions gave new dimensions to his poetry and literary writings and the literary tradition left by Iqbal and hitherto abandoned, found a new, vigorous and vivacious exponent in Naeem Siddiqi.

Like Iqbal, Naeem Siddiqi's message for the Islamic world (and for the whole mankind) is that the Islamic cultural system is the only panacea for all human ills. All ideologies other than that of Islam are based on falsehood. He wishes to see the whole mankind linked into one brotherhood. He believes in promotion of greater unity, solidarity and frater-

nity in the Muslim world. He considers this necessary because the Muslims should themselves set an example for the world to prove the dignity of their character, the glory of their religion and superiority of their ideology. The poet considers the classifications of man based upon countries, races and tongues as fatal poisons for our social, political and economic systems.

Naeem Siddiqi is a keen partner, a valourous fighter and a renowned combatant in the struggle against the hideous anti-Islamic movements of modernism, nationalism, atheism, socialism, communism, etc. He writes on two planes. On the one he is the exponent of all human problems and sufferings; on the other, he deals with the Muslims and their political, cultural, social and international problems. On both the planes, his basic thought remains uniform. Whether he addresses mankind or the world of Islam, his principles do not change. There is no contradiction in his thought in both the spheres. Yet, his greater

interest lies in the field of the world of Islam. This is his own domain, his own sphere, the courtyard of his own house. This concerns his own kith and kin. He is deeply touched by the oppression and agression suffered by mankind, but his grief is aggravated on the excesses and atrocities perpetuated by the "friends" and enemies upon the Islamic world.

Naeem Siddiqi's poetic pen is writing since the last 25 years. While introducing his poems on the Indo-Pak Jehad of 1965 Dr. Sayyed Mohammad Abdullah, the famous literary figure of Pakistan, had rightly observed "These poems of Naeem Siddiqi - *Khoon Ahang*, emanate from numerous colours of enthusiasm for Jehad. But it is not strange as this all is no timely affair because, for the past twenty years, he has been composing poems in the same style, singing in the same strain."

Naeem Siddiqi has been endowed by nature a beautiful pen. He beatifully portrays the problems

of life, always carrying distinguished aesthetic taste and blooming with deep passion. Every poem of his is in itself a new artistic experiment. His poetry speaks of his deep knowledge of life and human problems. He has not only seen but also touched, smelt and tasted the deleciousness and bitterness of life. In every line he composes and every song he sings, we find freshness and fragrence of love of humanity based upon the love of God and his Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Indeed Urdu poetry is heavily indebted to him for paving a new way of thought, for a constructive vision and for his being unparalelled in form and literary techniques. In form and technique he is progressive although he always remains a revolutionary Muslim in the sphere of thought and in the domain of ideology.

So far Naeem Siddiqi has published three poetic works : "*Shola-i-Khiyal*" (peoms written when behind the bars), "*Khoon Ahang*" (poems written consequent upon the Indo-Pak Jehad of 1965) and

"*Phir Ek Caravan Luta*" (poems written in memorium of martyrs of Islam in Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan, etc.). "Iqrar-e-Jurm," "Mal-e-Tijarat," "Agar Main Chahun To," "Aik Sawal Char Jawab," "Banam-e-Suad", "Tajdid", "Ay Ishq-e-Khush Inan", "Khalaa", "Main Ek Naat Kahun", "Maira Wattan", "Akhri Shaheed", "Mera Fan", "Ay Mire Sher-i-Dilnashin", "Talash", "Piala", "Kaheen Se", "Ek rat carvan serai main", "kacha saath", are his great and represENTIVE poems.

A collection fully representing Naeem Siddiqi has yet to be compiled. When this collection sees the light of the day we shall see a host of powerful poems, superb sonnets and lyrics full of life all depicting the artistic activities of the poet during the past 25 years, experiments made by him in the domain of poetic form and his fathomless love for the whole mankind.

Lahore :
14th April, 1968.

MUHAMMAD YOUSUF
B.A., LL.B.

TO MY ARAB BRETHERN !

I have a deep and fathomless love and affection for my Muslim brethern, of whatever colour, complexion, race, nationality, caste and language, from all over the world. This love and affection knows no bounds ; the chords of Islamic brotherhood are simply unbreakable.

I regard the Muslim Nation (Millat-e-Islamia) as a family - a cultural and religious family - whose offsprings are spread all over the world. Unfortunately, millions of members of this family have, of late, fallen prey to Godless ideologies and materialistic movements. For centruies past the Muslims have been surrounded by the tyrannical, imperialist

and colonial Western Powers, who had subjected them to cunning conspiraces, borne out of deep-rooted hatred, rancour and enemity. They succumbed to political domination, cultural spoilation and economic pillage by the so called "advanced" and "civilized" Western countries. A permanent cold war, with intermittent spells of hot war, was manoeuvered for the Muslims. The Western Powers victimised them with an undying, revengeful and rancourous crusading spirit. The aggressive sword of Democlese was always hanging over their heads. They were harassed, intimidated, looted, massacred and destroyed. Their life, property and honour were not safe. At times, these enemies appeared in the garb of friends and tread the path of treachery, double-dealing and deceit. In whatever garb they might appear, their innate desire was to harm the Muslims. One of the most recent examples of such highhandedness is the Israili aggression on the Arabs.

The valiant warriors of the Muslim Nation

whether Arabs or non-Arabs are today fighting for the cause of Islam and withstanding, tooth and nail, the onslaughts of their adversaries for safeguarding and preserving their religion and separate cultural entity and for protecting their independence and sovereign political status. In the face of heavy odds they continue their fight. The Muslim minorities, crushed under the heels of non-Muslim majority rule, patiently and valiantly suffer hardships, atrocities and inhuman treatment but their determination is never shaken. They do their utmost to maintain their separate entity as Muslims.

The Middle East is facing the enemy aggression in its ugliest and most shameful form. My mind's eye sees sorrowful figures, agonised faces, bruised bodies. I see respectable ladies unveiled, disgraced and dishonoured. There are crowds of homeless refugees, tearful widows, crying children and ill-fed and ill-clad prisoners in chains. There are demolished houses and ruined villages. Their inhabitants, shorn of their hearths and homes, flee for their lives

to find refuge in adjacent Muslim lands. The empty forlorn holy places of Muslims, particularly the Great Farthest Mosque (Masid-al-Aqsa) are devoid of their worshippars. The Muslims thank the Western world for it ! These are the great achievements of the Western civilization whose advocates never tire calling it "enlightened" ! It is also a great success for the United Nations Organization through whose aegis the world rests in "peace and tranquility". Blessed be the Great world Powers, who have created this "blissful atmosphere" !

Affection brooks no distance. My heart throbs with those of the Arabs. I suffer with the suffering Arabs ; I sigh with them. Their wounds are my wounds and I fully share the tragedy that has befallen them. I feel a virtual stream of pang and sorrow oozing out of my bereaved heart. This is soon converted into the lava of anguish. The ebb and flow of the tides, the circling of whirlpools and the bubbles in this invisible stream take the shape of my poetical ideas which crystalize my poems.

My ideas are my munitions of war and my poetic pen is my armament of warfare and with these I take my stand against the wanton aggression. When sincerety confronts some cruel and wild enemy of peace and liberty, art becomes the most powerful weapon to fight out the forces of aggression which crush the weaker communities, destroy world peace and make life an unbearable burden for mankind. This weapon surely works when shells and swords fail !

The condemnable Israili aggression came to me as a sudden blow. But defeat was never destined for me. I gathered my sinews of war and started for a struggle against the enemy. My ideas, feelings and passions, took the shape of poetry. I wrote more than twelve poems. These gave me and my countrymen relief from the painful effects of the aggression, but being in Urdu, they could not reach my Arab brethern. Fortunately, a kind and noble friend ("AL-QAZI") came to my rescue and rendered some of these poems into English. And on the

pages that follow you will see an Artist struggling against aggression, with his open sparkling wounds, which speak !

I DEDICATE these poems, a humble present, to my Arab and Muslim brethern living all over the world as a token of love and affection. My poetic pen, the artistic ideas which it depicts and the force of all the words at my command are designed for the long fight against aggression, till my last breath. This **Jehad** shall continue, O my Arab Brethern ! O, my dear family of Muslims ! O my caravan of the Great Muslim Millat !

NAEEM SIDDIQI.
Editor,
Monthly Sayyarah,
Lahore.
April 14, 1968.

THE WOUNDS SPEAK

Ah ! What a spring !

Red blood is spattered all around

Blood - on the apparel of the breeze

Blood - on the wide expanse of green

Blood - on the tip of prickly thorn

Blood - on the freshly blushing bud

Blood - on the lonely corner-cage

Blood - on the downy bower-nest.

Which henna-hued hand has so hurled
deep in our hearts the icy steel
that blood is flowing all around ?

The whole-night through seeped in my veins,
Poesy ;
And in the morn my verses
ring with sound of blood.

The human-meat is freely served
throughout the West
And every bar serves blood for drinks.

But blood !
whenever spilt, gives birth to storms
For, blood is all ———
The end-all and the be-all, friends !

Performer of all miracles

It is the conflagration

Yet, it is, the peace.

From it, rise roses, blooming red

With it are written

banner-lines of life's light.

These speeches made and stories told

in flowery words

are futile and nonsensical

Blood, only blood, it is, which counts,

my dear friends !

Blood, glows in beauty of all art,

flows in the grandeur of conscience.

Blood is the honour which is worth of all the world

It is the Ka'ba's guardian sole.

It is not riches, nor estates, no mansions huge
It is red-blood which is the
 richest treasure of man

Of this Eternity is witness
For this the Quran lays a base
The blood spilt in the cause of Truth
Shall never never go in vain.

———

JERUSALEM

My pen, my artist pen to-day
Is spitting blood, in deep dismay
My thoughts are all in disarray
Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

Your sacred precints yielded we
With dripping eyes and bleeding hearts
For, we have fallen in decay
Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

Before the fiery flood we stood
In thousands and we died for you
At every step in every lane

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

Through you the Prophet went on High
His fragrance still hangs in your sky
His steed of light trod on your hem

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

The prayer unique was offered here
With Mustafa leading in his rear
All prophets standing tier by tier

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

The Jewish rule will have to go
This tyranny we shall overthrow
Under a Saladin's flag, we know

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

On road to you I have to cross
The Presidents, the diplomats,
Ambitious, faceless bureaucrats

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

By hunters are encircled we
All round their crafty nets we see
And arrows rain on us, Ah me !

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

The Muslims are in disarray

Their hearts with brotherly love don't sway

While church and synagogue united stay

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

My Arab brothers ! Change outlook

The "Mammon-Creed", the "Stomach-faith"

Are icons of the West—and fake

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

The Western Asia has been turned

By butchers into slaughter-house

Where human-meat is freely sold

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

Smoulder hearts in Pakistan
Djakarta, Ankara cry, lament
For Arab bodies have been rent

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

With help from God and self-respect
All sorrows in our hearts will melt
All prickly thorns will be our friends

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

Before that thousand stumbling blocks
Calamities and battles stalk
From Srinagar to that Dome of Rock

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

And in this quest our armament
Will be the name of Mustafa
The Truth, the Faith, the praying heart

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

And once again will ride to you
On Steeds of Death, We row to you
In honour bound, by God we'll come

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

———

FROM BURNING MAPLES TO BLEEDING OLIVES

The flaming maples of Kashmir
The sandy-ocean of Sinai
Are victims of Imperialists
The Himalayas, the Mount Sinai
Are tombs of culture, peace and love
The brilliance of the Sciences' sun
Has been engulfed by deepening gloom.

My heart aches due to plight of both
For both of these are homelands mine
My comrades dwell in both of these
My love for both the lands is true
In both, our wishes received a shock
In both, was shattered peace of mine.
In thousands lie the victims here
In thousands died the heroes there

I try to sing but am breathless
The chords of my sitar are dead
Changez, reborn, has struck Kashmir
While Tartars have re-sacked Baghdad
The breeze laments Kashmiri's plight
Northerner weeps at Palestine.

But martyrdom beckons us all
And life must walk on daggers' edge
On every petal, every rose
I find this writ-large, by the thorns
And every desert-atom says :
"I am memorial of your faith".

You have subdued our gory corpse
The Conscience and the Soul you can't
A tyranny-founded might is false.
Enthroned on corpses ! What a State !
There is a wave of restlessness
Through Kashmir be or Jerusalem
The olive trees and maple shades
Are holding breath for the right moment.

We know the art of dying, for,

This death gives birth to life aglow

This restless struggle knows no end

This lovers' lane has many a stage

Our history is an ocean vast

Directionless and sure, boundless

We know our destination well,

Its length, its pitfalls and its turns.

Even ensnared, we do not yield

Encaged, like eagles prey on high.

The same pulse beats at Rawalpindi

Java, Ankara and Cairo

For every drop, we'll render account

This one blow is a debt we owe,

These conspirators' castles are

But cob-webs of deceipt, blind force

We have been punished for our sin

Of friendship with these hypocrites.

We now realise that we were wrong

In spurning friends, embracing foes

In following others' views and ways

Forgetting God's, the Prophet's say.

We gathered live-coals in our clothes

In sleeves bred vipers **White** and **Red**

So this defeat we did deserve

But now we turn the leaf of Truth

We change our thinking from now on

This lash of Nature is enough.

Behind the dirge of this defeat

Lie tidings of our victory

Much like behind the dust-cloud looms

The lovely Leila's palanquin.

———

AWAKE

(1)

Awake ! For, tyranny is in spate
Awake ! And rend the waves of gloom
Awake ! At women and children's call
The dopy Emir of ours ! Awake !

For, Nationalism - your love - is dead
Its hang —over is off your head
- A viper suddenly bit and fled
It's no use beating its track, Awake !

What cost these visits to land of vice

These glamours — Sabah's paradise

These comforts end in sobs and cries

The sleeping Arab conscience ! Awake !

(2)

Siddique's glow should light your brow

Farooque's sternness in you should flow

The cause of Ali's might you know -

Where is that barley-bread ? Awake !

With foes in hands and gloves ? Oh no !

With friends at logger-heads ? Oh no !

This self-oblivion ? Oh no, no !

Come line-up, rich and poor ! Awake !

Spill all the wines and break the cask
Break strings of violin, lust forsake
Come take up weapons for His sake
This is the clarion's call. Awake !

Advance to be a martyr
Advance with valour in your heart
Forefathers' honour at your back
May Allah help you all. Awake !

May your resolve be iron-like
May your **Adhan** raise storms anew
May prayers yours confirm your faith
May Allah be with you. Awake !

INVOCATION TO THE PROPHET

Sweet sweet is this seeping sorrow -
The treasure of my faith
True ! We hav'nt appreciated
Your status, your worth my Sire !
Yet, did we do so our own ?
How hard is life on the Ummah
How cheap their blood, my Sire !
Our thoughts are all spread-eagled
A Kindly glance of Yours
Will gather us on the path again

Your Muslim is the chattel of merchants
like a stupid stripling, my Sire !
What times have befallen the world :
That calls for justice, to peace,
Man calls to arms, my Sire !
By thousands lie hidden the snares now
In what was your garden, my Sire !
The honour of man lies wounded
The grandeur of man is gory
My thoughts, - celestial - roaming -
My faith lie trampled, frightened
Hunters, in millions teeming,
Have laid a siege to deers.
One who could'nt meet my state
Laughs at my wounds to-day

In my heart flutter emotions
But ah ! This cage-like life
My cloak, the cover for black-deeds,
Lies rent in tatters, my Sire !
Our Qibla, the first one - Jerusalem
Ties prostrate before the tyrants
This first stage of your Ascension
Is it meet for Jewish rule ?
Each stone, each lane is blood-spattered
Each house, each man is afire
From the Dome please cast a look around
Synagogues and churches illuminated
With Muslims' blood, my Sire !

While in every land of ours
Hangs kingship like Democles' sword
The labourer's hut is a dungeon
The rich in luxury roll.
Alas ! False 'isms' are practised
While the Quran lies neglected
The sword, the spear lie rusted
The guitar stands fubished, my Sire !
None wants the purity of heart and glance
For, nudes dance about without attire
Even now, the Muslim begs for Your mercy
In shame, in tears, my Sire !
In this stark gloom there is but one hope-
The ray of your remembrance, my Sire !

For Crusades, the confederates have risen again

But our hearts are with faith afire

"*La taqnatu*" is being repeated

"*La tahzanu*" is being re-chanted

Like Tatars' inroad this is but another

We have weathered these before, my Sire !

The severer this storm, this trial

The better for our welfare, my Sire !

These winds are but harbingers of spring

Soon it will blossom, my Sire !

Our love for Jehand is there

It's the best armament, my Sire !

Lined up are whole generations

Of Muslims the world over, my Sire !

One soul in million bodies

From Lahore to Angora pulsates

Not I alone, your (humble) Panegyrist

The entire Ummab is in ecstasy

Of being your serfs, my Sire !

GUN POWDER AND FAITH

Scorched to death was my faithful beloved
Jerusalem ! I am utterly disconsolate
The blasts of gun-powder burnt her
My ambitions smoulder like smoke inchoate

Her eye-lashes don't move nor her lips quiver
Nor are there ripples of her smile nor spates of tear
Those gazelle-eyes - they'll never see me again
The entire universe is under desolation's reign
Those flower-like hands will never rise in prayer
Nor those lips recite *Ar-Rahman* with flair.
That slender cask-like neck is blisters all
All cups and flasks on their faces fall.
That *sandal*-hued body is white like musk
Her tresses smoulder like frank-incense husk
In those lake-like eyes there is no ebb, no flow
Her cheeks with love, like moon no longer glow.

That sanctity of womanhood adorning her brow
Lies ravaged before the cult of aggression's blow
Oh ! Where shall I find shade - cool and chaste
Where find refuge from sorrows small and great
That very special look which made my manhood bloom
I miss it and I cry like a lad in utter gloom
Alas ! Our comradeship in life has come to end
Alone like a wayfarer I stand, for myself to fend.
Much like a poet, sorrowful and sad
Before whom the ashes of his anthology who had
My grief has out-stricken all sorrows and griefs
This pain to all pains has brought remedies and reliefs
A strange unforeseen difficulty I confront
No longer do I bear life's problems' brunt
For, those martyred have found their salvation true
But those alive are between the Devil and the deep sea blue.

This miracle of Shylock's progeny witness
At every step lie pieces of human meat
The hosts were turned out of house and hut
While the guests forcibly admitted themselves to every treat
Lord protect ! From these practitioners of usury

Their victory lies in human-greatness's defeat
Exhale they the poison of tyranny and denial
In their blood courses Satan's dissolved deceit.
How tragic that over man's destiny squats
An opportunist octopus in human guise
This civilisation of steel and of gun-powder
Is Time's own curse in disguise
Materialism holds the spell of power
Breathless lies Reason and humiliated are the wise
Conspiracies thrive under the label of friendship
While wars are fought under the name of peace
Powerless are Right, Truth, Justice and Knowledge
Tyranny and transgression hold the sway
The noble and the chaste are weak and feeble
Thieves, murderers, marauders rule today
Tragic it is that 'moralists' guard the gates
The cry goes round that. prophets' usher in the way.

My beloved's burnt body in your trust I place
Jerusalem ! Guard it and keep watch over the trust
She who liked a bed of roses and of basil-royal
Lies buried beneath a mount of mere dust
This mound of dust - for even a day it may not last
No chronogram there is, no lamp, nor any sign
No bath was given it nor shrouds were draped
No funeral prayers offered nor a Quranic line

These ashes place I under your trust and care
This for me is epitome of Time and Space
She sleeps, let her; in a way lucky she is
I am glad. She at least has a resting place.

Her love as my dagger I hold in my hand
The battle fields beckon me and call
Gun-powder I shall fight with her memory
The ruins bear witness ! I stake my all.
Wherever I smell powder I shall hasten to go
And raise storms of blood—I will
Even if defeated I shall fight on and on
My foes have made my resolve keener still
From the ruined front calls my martyrdom
I have my honour still and work it will
This honour is the essence of my history
The heading of so many a splendored century

It is asleep beneath your dust, Jerusalem !
But Faith of mine is wide awake, thanks be to Him.

———

A WAYFARER

(1)

On the Bank of River Ravi

On the bank of River Ravi
Silent, sad, in sorrow
stand I,
Deep immersed in thoughts
of destination mine
—— a rambler drowned in grief
with wounded heart and feet
drip blood at every step
my destination was in sight
but, anon, I am lost.
My journey was my treasure
My own guides robbed me of,
Alas !
Companionless, disconsolate, am I
but I have now resolved
to fare my way alone
- to rest wherever, I like
- without reliance on **Khidhr**

I prefer to be lost in rambles
I am lost in my own self
and seek myself again.

Ripples of River Ravi !
You have been my support
From you I've learnt the secret,
The lesson, of this Life
But was there ever such an evening
Of gloom before the sunset
Of alien atmosphere
Of changed and changeful view
Of tarrying lingering flow
Of turgid muddy water
Of bed of yours all bloody
Of every drop afflame
All waves - afloat like corpses
O what a death-deluge ?
All whirlpools grave-like gaping
And spirits conspirating
Dome-like bubbles, small, tiny
Appear and disappear
As if but moments earlier
Some boat has sunk right here

ON THE BANK OF THE NILE

———

On the bank of the Nile
Stand I
Sorrowing, silent, sad,
Alone. !
The Pyramids ogle at me,
A stranger
A stranger in every land,
            every clime,
Un-understood,
Un-comprehending,
Un-introduced, unacquainted.
My feelings are a skein
My thoughts inter-twined
Distant is the chateu of my dreams
Straggling the world of my thoughts

I stand on the bank of the Nile
Among myriads, alone.
In this land of Pharaohs
With Moses in my heart.
What has become of Joseph's chastity
For, Zuleikhas coquettishly throng
That golden age of my ancestors
Is engraved on grains of these sands —

Those armies of Amir-bin-al' Aas,
God's Law and Omar's whip
Instead, rules here the Sphinx
While Mount Sinai looks silently on.
Where are those Heavenly Tablets ?
Where the Seeker ? Where the Glipmse ?
All around rules Samri's magic
- the golden calf, the idol gods
Ropes now turn like snakes
For Moses' Sceptre is not there.
These sand dunes, all-pervading
This desert, a sea of cyclones
Alone, in these surroundings
I stand immersed in thoughts
The Nile - O why is it - blood-like ?
And why its waves feel choked ?
And why tears well-up in whirlpools' eyes ?
And why the corals' heart bleeds ?
Whom shall I ask, whom question
What is this all about ?
In all their history, the Muslims
Have never been through such times
For Ghazis have always preferred death
Over falling back a step.
We have been offering our life-blood

But never did we shed tears
These scenes of unforeseen events
- O why ? My Lord God ! why ?
Each heart is as if wounded
Each face as if pulled long
Stricken by disease are they themselves
The Messiahs who claim healing powers.
What has become of that Revolution
That drained the Faithfuls' blood ?
The masses are on its look out -
Shelterless, without refuge.
Why is the anthem of nationalism silent ?
Why chord of 'progress' broken ?
I wait to question some one -
A Sheikh Banna, a Syed Qutb
A Hudhaibi or a Talat,
Adorning the bank of the river,
With their beaming faces, their believing hearts.
I would kiss their feet and cry in anguish
Shedding a river of my hidden grief.
Is there a cure, a remedy for all this ?
I would, in all humility, ask
What sins were committed by the masses ?
For which they suffered so hard.
- In tones grief-giving
Flowing from beyond horizons
Thus spake one side of the gallow

"I am the Nile, the basin of Nothingness
Thousands of way-farers I've seen.
Taking me as a plank, a foot-hold
Many a caravan has passed
My noose has swallowed full many
A neck of the devotees of God
Blood-thirsty are these - my fellow-sides,
Their veins drink deep of blood
This dry-wood mine is phenomenal -
Each morn it bears a bud.
Each dawn the wind of tyranny
Each time a flower blooms.
The Muslims see but only others
This ill is a cureless ill
The white vipers, the Red Revolution
Some of us love these, some that.
In company with these idols we've forgotten
Allah, the Prophet and the Faith
Truthfulness is like an orphan
Falsehood rules the roost
The well-wishers who dared raise a voice
Were choked to silence by Time -
Some have gone to the gallows
Others rot behind prison-walls
These bars of Revolution
Serve but imported wine
And toasts are proposed here

To 'deceive friends' and 'foes' alike.
For these 'brothers' ever in times calamitous
Cannot tolerate sitting around a table -
Like flocks of birds scattered
Never to find their nests again.
It is Divine Retribution
This calamity for all the Arabs.

The faces you are looking for here
You won't find their traces
They drowned in their own blood of life
Their conscience bade them so.
Those stars, moons, suns resplendent
Were devoured by a dawnless night.

The pattern of thought has not yet altered
'Development' still fogs their brains
To Allah they are still indifferent
To idols' apron strings still tied
What other hell will be let loose ?
I am at a loss to know !"

On the bank of the Nile
Stand I
Sorrowing, silent, sad
Alone ... ... -
Hearing a voiceless message
On the bank of The Nile
Alone

(3)

ON THE BANK OF JORDAN RIVER

On the bank of Jordan River
Stand I
Sorrowing, sad, silent, alone
Deep, deep, immersed in thought -
My sensitive heart subsdued.
This wood of corpses around me
Served like chops, this human meat.

These Ghazis - young Jordanians -
- Embodiments of valour
Redeemed the honour of the Millat
In death became eternal
In rows upon rows lie gory
At every step martyred
No arms and no companion
Yet they did not leave the front
Beneath the dagger they fulfilled
Pure Love's extreme tradition.
Martyrdom's brimful cups they drank
To live for ever and ever.
These guardians of Jerusalem,
Whose loyalty the Rock witnessed,
Didn't yield, in life, to the Jews
The trust of Aqsa Mosque.

The beastly horde could advance
But only on dead bodies.
These Ghazis - Jordan's flower
How handsome comely were
I wish to embrace and kiss
The dust beneath their feet
Is healing balm for my eyes.

I see in thousands injured
Their chests with bullets pierced
Blood drops flow so freely
Like maddening love had rained.

My life is yours, my martyrs !
You are my only hope.
You lit the lamp of future
With oil from our past
All spots where you have fallen
Will give birth to new life

- On the bank of Jordan River
Stand I alone, aloen!

(4)

ON THE BANK OF RIVER TIGRIS

On the bank of River Tigris
Stand I in silence alone
This small but stormy river
Fights as if its own waves
The West-wind be or Eastern
Blow ill and evil here.
From within its every atom
Rise storms afresh, anew.
The divers here are special
Gathering pebbles and losing pearls.
This cradle of civilisation
This basin of Euphrates, Tigris
This Syria and this Iraq
Here trod that great refugee
From Ur on way to Mecca
Here stamped the sands of desert

———

With his blood Imam Hussain
Why does this land spit fire ?
Why is it fire itself ?
This land inherited the Faith of Truth
Its atmosphere breathed peace.
Why here these daily storms ?
Why each day this chaos ?
So aimless and so endless,
Emotionsless - Madness ?
Night falls and there is voilent change
Day dawns with revolution.
A Muslim's dagger drips

With another Muslim's blood !
The palaces and the hamlets here
In calamities' midstream are
The gardeners ravage own gardens
Own lamps incendiary are
Own blood-drops sown in plenty
Harvest of corpses yield.
It was only but yesterday
The Jews trembled in fear
The self-same Jews have trampled
Your rights and your flesh.
These brothers of mine, dear brother !
Their woes are headaches mine !
On the bank of River Tigris
Stand I in silence, sad !

(5)

ON THE BANK OF RAVI AGAIN

On the bank of river Ravi
Silent, sorrowing, sad,
Stand I
Deep immersed in thought
Will the Muslim of my time
Realise his true position ?
This wing-tied and foot-fettered, Eagle of Mecca
Will it ever fly again ?

For slavery still remains
The proud crown of his head.

He should look in the Quran's mirror
And recognise himself.
With his own beliefs, his own laws
He should build his world anew
He should cast off borrowed dagger
And weigh in his hands his own
He should rip up that old Revolution
Whose waves from Medina arose.

Just change your heart, your vision
The whole scene will then change
Or else, Nature's lashes
Have known mercy for none.
No one escapes its punishment
No one is favourite of God.
If one wave does'nt teach you a lesson
A tornado will then follow

Lord God ! Yourself protect us
Your whip is so severe.

On Ravi's bank I am musing
There is no boat, no end in sight
Embodiment of ache am I
From head to foot restless -
Hope sees me with dazed eyes
My ambitions all lie shattered

My voice as if a camp-fire
My fancy is like lightening

For this harvest of love and loyalty
O God ! Grant me a spark -

From eternity, Reason smouldered
Eternally Love was afire

This sorrow, this sadness are evanascent
I know this truth entire.
My Faith is a river flowing
The Spring of Beginning is its source
Deeds rise in it like ripples
Aims sail in it like boats
This Perishing world is one short
The other, the Eternal Abode.
Gorging mountains, rocks dislodging
— cutting banks and hewing stones
This river has been aflow
For over thirteen centuries.
This life is a chain of duties
And man is a traveller ever
This constant effort, this Jehad incessant
Are the firm features of our Faith

Rest means disobedience
Immobility is infidelity
Thus have ruled before and ever
All savants of Ego, of self,

I hear the clarion calling
Calling for Jehad again
While perseverence is my coat-of-arms
Determination is dagger mine
My steed is my own fancy
My glance is my lance
My thirst is my water-ration
My hunger my provisions
Slave of desire I will never be
Bondsman of body I am not.
My companion is my infirmity
My prop my destitution
My still small voice of conscience
Is to me the marching knell
My heart-throb my marching song
Each night is a message of ambush
Each day a battle-day

Farewell my dear Ravi
Already I am late

On the bank of river Ravi
In sorrow, sad, alone !
